Traveler's Guide to the Acronym Wasteland

Tankies and Authoritarian Entryist Groups in Lək̓ʷəŋínə̓ŋ təŋəxʷ and W̱SÁNEĆ, so-called "Victoria, BC"

Freedom from Money, Jobs, and Education!

"As for the kaleidoscope of political parties and trade unions, with their tiresome names—P.S.U.C., P.O.U.M., F.A.I., C.N.T., U.G.T., J.C.I., J.S.U., A.I.T.—they merely exasperated me. It looked at first sight as though Spain were suffering from a plague of initials." - George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia

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Note that this is the first version (V1.0) as of September 4th, 2025, and is likely to have some mistakes. I thank Nim Thorn for their *Traveler's Guide to the Acronym Wasteland: Tankies and Authoritarian Entryist Groups in Philadelphia (2024),* which this work is heavily based on, and language borrowed from. Check *linktr.ee/travelersguidevic* for the latest version.

Perhaps you are a University student in this floater town perusing this. If so: perfect, you are my target audience. If you are not, keep going, there is still important information to glean here.

This has been passionately written in response to the blood, sweat, and tears shed from the rage, disappointment, grief, burnout, and retreat of many young people. Young people just like me who really want to do something to fucking change this shit in this city, got sucked into one of these groups, and then forever retired their ingenuity, their brilliance, and their spirit from the revolutionary energy here. Maybe, just maybe this could alleviate even one person from the authoritarian pitfalls here ready to chew folks up and spit them out.

Naturally, this guide will become outdated over time. The best thing you can do to inoculate yourself against these types of groups is to recognize their patterns. This was laid out quite wonderfully in *Red Flags: Before You Join That Org: A Primer on*

Authoritarian & Vanguard Communist Groups & What You Can Do Instead (2024) published on Unsalted Counter Info.

There are still lots of healthy groups and collectives here, which are not coercive or friendly-to-authoritarians, which deserve their own friendly Green Flags guide some day.

But wait, aren't you splitting the movement?

The assumed guideline of "Left Unity" against infighting or criticizing tactics is meant to apply only to those who agree on objectives. As anarchists, we simply do not agree on one linear, stifling party line or system, and have seen these destroy peoples' revolutionary potential. Beyond some common sense insights, the "Left Unity" framework has serious flaws in the ways it's often invoked by hierarchical organizations, and uncritically accepted by others. Many people in these organizations are intelligent and do appear to have good intentions, or at least their own corrupt motivations, for their often severely fucked up actions. The web of manipulations and unholy alliances that is at play is extremely complex and goes in all directions.

We must challenge their peace-policing and authoritarian co-opting of movements. Is it leftist infighting when the RCP condemns anti-authoritarians fighting their favorite pet regimes? Or when they protect property and our enemies, intentionally attempting to manipulate popular mobilization to benefit their controlling, ineffective, counter-revolutionary organizations? How well have popular fronts alongside authoritarian communists and liberals fared historically, could someone remind me? Something about the Russian Revolution, Spanish Civil War, anti-fascist WWII resistance, practically every protest movement in the last 25 years...

It's certainly true that a culture of public denunciation can run into some of the more noxious elements of Maoism, which many of these groups exemplify. It can also be a means for the maintenance of stratified in-groups and out-groups, 'punching down', settling for low-hanging fruit, and 'society of the spectacle' style power-politics and manipulation. However, this doesn't mean we should reject any kind of criticism of these cultish behaviors with simplistic common sense about the woes of 'cancel culture'. Such knee-jerk reactions, beyond being accidentally interesting by paradox (cancel the cancellers?), are a way by which all kinds of abuse are conventionally justified. Indeed, the same system which Others with one mouth also upholds itself with another, by

conveniently choosing to invoke disingenuous versions of relativist, 'tolerant' unity in the name of the sacrificial altar of a constructed "community," movement, and its more-moral-than-thou oh-so-humble superiority. Hierarchical, all-subsuming group politics are as dependent on the suppression and capture of difference and conflict within the group as they are on heightening it with the outside.

If these criticisms must remain "in-house" as private or in internal channels, can this truly be a revolutionary movement that exceeds such compartmentalized, legible, categorizing, and flattening structures? How thus can we open and dissolve into direct participation and wild transformation of our relationships and the land? The State we reproduce everyday with our actions?

A community exists only as long as the beautifully inadequate symbols of it serve to keep it from becoming just a symbol. A real community is a collective dynamic which has at its base a shared hostility to any separate, flattening rule which would subjugate and degrade its free, egalitarian relations (including free conflict and dissociation). This refusal comes alongside an acceptance of the existence of suffering and death, and an active orientation toward desire, joy, and possibility.

I'm not saying that anarchists should only struggle alongside anarchists. This is all quite complex, and there are no easy answers. Deception (by us or others), tactical decisions amidst unknowability and desperation, and the dynamic, condition-based nature of people's desires and orientations can make these choices awfully slippery.

I leave you before embarking on the Wasteland with some last words from the Métis anarchist Tawinikay, which skillfully highlight below-the-surface colonialisms many of these groups and their logics are perpetuating, and should also be considered if one is to engage with these groups.

[Authoritarian] Communists envision a system without a capitalist Canada, but they still want a communist state. One that will inevitably need to control land and exploit it. Find common heart with those who want to see the state destroyed, to have autonomous communities take its place, and to restore balance between humans and all our relations. Choose those who listen more than they talk, but not those who will do whatever you say and not think for themselves.

...

It is my belief that there can be no reconciliation that recognizes the self-determination of Indigenous peoples so long as the state of Canada exists. Once embraced, this conclusion leads you towards a radical and revolutionary politic in search of answers. Though I will admit I remain skeptical as an anarchist, I spent a good deal of time listening and trying to envision what Communist comrades meant when they spoke of revolution.

I asked them where Indigenous nations fit into their hope for a proletariat-dictated state. I asked them how this new world would make space for Indigenous worldviews or land-based spiritualities. I asked them how they intended to share power and return land.

Time and time again I was convinced – through their insufficient or nonexistent answers to those questions – that their proletariat-dictated state would be no better for the people or the earth than the liberal-capitalist one we have now.

Many times they would tell me that the return of land was paramount to upholding the justice of the new [C]ommunist state, but their mechanisms for handing back that land were missing. In this new state, where land was to be publicly seized and redistributed among working class settlers, where was the room to authoritatively give away huge sections of it to sovereign entities without sparking massive settler-entitlement-provoked unrest?

Many times they countered that argument by saying there was more than enough Crown Land to give back to Indigenous nations that they wouldn't have to give away cityscapes or farm land, but they fail to realize that much of that Crown Land is the site of massive resource wealth. An industrial communist state – which we could almost definitely expect – would need to produce prosperity to ensure a counterrevolution didn't quickly overtake its new central authority. Wouldn't it then need resources in order to keep the people happy and also to fuel the grand people's military?

These are all huge problems, and the picture they paint doesn't make me very enthusiastic for the coming red revolution, but most importantly, they don't begin to address the fundamental conflict. The same conflict that the Canadian state faces now in its own reconciliatory rhetoric.

Even if this land known as Canada were to be chopped in half and half returned to Indigenous nations, the relationship between a dense, centralized state and a diverse,

heterogeneous group of communities will always remain a gross imbalance of power. There is no nation-to-nation relationship, it's one of nation-to-nations.

In addressing this problem, Communists always point to the same tired solutions that Canadians do. Insisting that Indigenous people will form new federations like the AFN [(Assewhich will help to liaise between the parties. I am not inspired by this solution.

Okay, here we go.

Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP)/Socialist Fightback/StudentStrike4Palestine

The group behind those obnoxious 'Are you a Communist?' stickers, a rebrand of Socialist Fightback. These are the people you're most likely to run into here, especially on University campus. (Which they have also shown up as StudentStrike4Palestine.) They will show up to anyone's political event or protest uninvited with a few generic signs "____ is Worker's Struggle" and a red tent to guerrilla-table their for-sale zines. This is a Trotskyist group which is the Canadian section of the RCI (Revolutionary Communist International,) itself a rebrand of the IMT (International Marxist Tendency). They rhetorically waffle on working with the NDP, and are generally in favor of electoralist participation (having historically been one of the Trotskyist groups most focused on participation in moderate politics, rejecting anything more radical that would 'scare off' the masses), and support a mass-based party led by a strict, dogmatic vanguard with close ties to the working class (especially its industrial component). Participation in social movements and labour/local organizing is practiced as part of an 'entryist' insertion into them, as well as other Left parties, in order to form coalitions, control, remain in touch with, and transform these groups from the inside. Union organizing is specifically emphasized, as a means of unifying and organizing the working class and its struggles under their subtle but pernicious control.

Their strategy is strictly phase-based (an easy way to call non-revolutionary things revolutionary and indefinitely delay real revolution, while making a target of those who revolt in the here and now without being controlled by manipulative, de-escalatory 'organizers' of reality) and focused on proper procedure. In 'developed' countries their aim is to first implement a 'democratic workers' state with a planned and nationalized socialist economy. This will starve imperialism of its participation and act in solidarity with other more advanced socialist states which may arise, without immediately

abolishing the market, classes, or prisons as a whole. From this point they'd supposedly push the revolution on as before; in a unified mass-based process of the working class, solely under their party's leadership (carefully framed as benevolent and collaborative, but strictly programmatic and totally justified in using any effective means) as exclusive, 'scientifically proven' vanguard.

Like most other Marxist-Leninists, especially Trotskyists, RCP are highly pro-technology and development, viewing the 'bourgeois-democratic revolution' of industrial growth and modernization of regions they refer to as 'very backwards' as a net positive for people. To them this is a causative, if insufficient, factor toward future revolution, due to the strengthening of the industrial working class which they see as the exclusive revolutionary subject. This includes cases like the Soviet Union/Russia, China, Brazil, Japan, and India, even as they criticize the imperialist capital, states, and Stalinist bureaucracy which they acknowledge carried out those transformations. They support the limited popular framing of the seizure of power as only aimed at 'bourgeois-democratic revolution', as a strategic omission in 'backwards' regions before carrying out the actual aims of 'worker's democracy' and economic socialization. As well, while they criticize the Stalinists for their halting of the revolution internally and externally in the bureaucratic maintenance of class domination, and Mao for the inappropriate peasant character of his 'proletarian-bonapartist' revolution, they still view the nationalization and socialist central planning of the economy in these cases as a positive development.

The RCP are rhetorically attentive to axes of oppression like imperialism, race, gender, sexual orientation, environmental damage, fascism, and police violence, and claim to address their root causes opportunistically. (For instance, Luigi Mangione stickers, while referring 'lone wolf' anarchists" as "adventurist.") However, they narrowly identify these with an essentialized idea of the capitalist organization of labour (of course not the same thing and not a valid revolutionary target when RCP are the ones controlling a nominally socialist industrial market economy in a statist, authoritarian class society) and the economic oppression of the industrial working class. Their analyses of these issues are focused on the idea of working class unity, a framing which minimizes the reality of oppression, conflict, or difference between groups. This leads to portrayals of oppressed people who don't support the party's limited, oppressive and simplistic solutions, or don't accept their leadership, as counter-revolutionaries.

The RCP doublespeaks on Indigenous sovereignty and pipeline projects, saying they would nationalize extractive and fossil fuel industries, not immediately end them, claiming against the plainly obvious truth that "On this basis, a massive expansion of the world economy could be realized in complete harmony with the environment." In other fantastical industrial solutions to the world's problems, they'd embark on "an extensive program of useful public works to create millions of quality jobs and upgrade public infrastructure, transportation, and housing". They advocate for the confinement of people under "a full-time job or a place in education for all", with the unions under their vanguard's control in charge of hiring and firing, and the means of production owned and controlled by the state. They limit their demands to a 20 hour work week, "a living wage," rent no more than 10% of income, and support a socialist globalized economy.

The RCI's founder Alan Woods, who's also a co-founder of the IMT, worked prominently as an advisor and defender of Hugo Chávez, meeting him personally multiple times and even being driven around the country in Chávez's motorcade. The IMT and later RCI likewise actively supported Chávez as organizations. Hugo Chávez led an authoritarian government in Venezuela which enacted numerous vaguely Marxist-inspired policies, funded by an early 2000s rise in oil prices. Chávez created social programs and subsidies to increase food access, literacy, health-care access, housing, and education. He created worker and farmer cooperatives, carried out agrarian land reform and nationalized large proportions of the country's economy. These programs were somewhat successful in immediately improving quality of life and reducing inequality, however they ultimately failed to seriously address deeper structural inequalities and poverty. The programs were also often neglected after Chávez had periodically consolidated authority in elections, being strategically targeted at whichever specific poor population's support was most crucial at the moment. Chávez also significantly increased centralized authority, and held to a nationalist, indoctrinating line with elements of a cult of personality. He increased market participation and extractive activity in rural and indigenous areas, and was brutally repressive towards anti-authoritarian resistance.

Venezuela eventually suffered a devastating economic crash, partly due to Chávez significantly overspending to prop up these social programs to maintain popular support, and creating an overwhelming economic dependence on nationalized oil exports, leading to crisis when the prices fell. Chávez's economy depended on foreign market participation and tightly effective state functioning, but huge debts, strict price controls, and hostility to private business isolated it and increased its heavy dependence on

exploitative multinationals and anti-Western imperialist states. Meanwhile, the state was functional only to the degree that it bought support for its authoritarian practices, and the resulting political culture of patronage, corruption, and cronyism prevented efficient management of nationalized sectors. The overall structure was something like a pyramid scheme.

Chávez allied with authoritarian states like Iran (which the IMT, while criticizing Iran, justified as a shrewd economic compromise, citing Lenin's consideration of granting Western capitalists concessions in Siberia in order to 'develop the productive forces' of the revolution; this party line lead to the IMT's Iran section leaving the group), Syria, Cuba, Belarus, Libya, and China. He also allegedly hired the Colombian communist guerrilla group FARC (which targets civilians in indiscriminate attacks and parasitizes rural and indigenous communities with extortion) to assassinate his political opponents. His police and supporters viciously attacked protesters, including shooting attacks in the streets of Caracas which left numerous anarchists wounded. Chávez never really held a clearly articulated ideology, bouncing around between incompatible reference points. He was animated by conspiracy theories and a personal quality of erratic behavior that many close to him suggest was either untreated bipolar disorder or the manipulative behavior of a disordered personality. By the time of his death, Venezuela was worse off than before his rule, with higher inflation, shortages of food and other products, growing inequality and violent mafias, peaking in an ongoing extreme humanitarian crisis. His successor, the dictator Nicolás Maduro, only intensified and accelerated the previous administration's failed policies and authoritarianism, carrying out extensive atrocities as the country's economy and ability to provide for basic necessities collapsed.

The IMT/RCI's Mexican section supports the vaguely populist social-democratic party Morena of the former president AMLO (Andrés Manuel López Obrador). Their Greek section previously participated 'critically' in the SYRIZA coalition in 2013 (a big tent party of radical Left and centrist groups which disingenuously drew from anti-establishment protest movements only to become a pro-EU, harshly pro-austerity, repressive government when it took power in 2015 via coalitions with the right-wing) and currently critically supports the KKE communist party (a parliamentary, pro-order group which has repeatedly physically attacked anarchists and autonomous demonstrators, collaborated with police and Golden Dawn fascists, and opposes drug decriminalization).

The RCP fully justifies and supports the brutal crushing of the Kronstadt Rebellion by Trotsky. This was a 1921 rebellion in Russia, whose participants included many sailors

who had fought in the 1917 revolutions and Civil War. The rebels fought against the Soviet Party apparatus in favor of the original goals of the revolution, for full autonomy of the worker's councils and unrestricted struggle against the remaining class structures and prevailing bureaucracy and authoritarianism. Trotsky led the Red Army campaign against the rebels, whose diverse motivations and participants included a very significant anarchist component, resulting in the killing in combat of around a thousand rebels and the execution of 1,200–2,168 more. Repeating Trotsky's description of it as a tragic necessity, the RCP insists the rebellion was 'petit-bourgeois' and motivated by hunger amid wartime rationing (I suppose starvation is a proletarian virtue). They also point to antisemitic and pro-White Army statements from some of the rebels, which would obviously be reprehensible, but which frankly I'm not historically versed enough on Kronstadt to fully parse the validity or generalizable significance of, though it's apparently a contested subject. Ultimately, RCP's defense of the repression however hinges on their contention that they had to be massacred for their refusal to accept the unjust compromises of a centrally planned administration and military, which prioritized the industrial urban proletariat over the rural peasants.

RCP frames their struggle in polluted and oppressive terms, "We are fighting to defend... the most elementary conditions of a civilized existence, to defend culture and civilization against barbarism." They see almost all modern or contemporary thought, like existentialism, post-structuralism, etc. as bourgeois atomization containing no worthwhile insights. The IMT has long portrayed cops as "workers in uniform", and police unions as a potentially liberatory working class institution. They now admit that police unions in the US are irredeemable, but that they should still be supported in some of their demands in other countries. It was only in 1999 that RCI's predecessors finally made any statement in support of queer people, having previously published anti-gay rhetoric. As recently as 2018, they've called protests against TERFs "thoroughly reactionary" in how they supposedly stifle debate. They hold to a strictly biological vision of sex, weakly claiming to support trans people (their first international article defending trans people was published in 2023) while criticizing the vast majority of queer theory as anti-materialist. In regards to transition for minors they've been firmly opposed, "Of course, there is no question of children taking such a drastic step".

The RCP co-opts struggle into an ultimately reformist cadre. RCP goes out of their way to denounce "bourgeois anarchism," but will happily steal art from Indigenous Anarchist Gord Hill for their for-sale "decolonization" pamphlets. The RCP "critically supports" the

reactionary NDP when possible, including Niki Ashton — who "[couldn't] remember" voting for the joint imperialist invasion and bombing of Libya. When the RCP still went under Fightback, the organization was rife with sexual abuse allegations (see Jamie Graham's *Why I Left Fightback*) and in "Ontario" was banned from CUPE 3903 Picket Lines.

Members are expected ("guilted") to commit to financial and labour obligations to the group, including but not limited to any combination of membership dues, weekly contributions to a "travel levy", paying a newspaper subscription, fulfilling newspaper sale quotas; pub socials, contributions and assistance toward fundraising for new 'full-timers', or toward a new office, or toward a new printer; fees of admission into and costs of travel and board toward the annual regional 'Montreal Marxist Winter School', and the respectively more expensive national congress, and world congresses.

Worker Solidarity BC

Formerly known as the Retail Action Network. A movement that started with anarch-ish roots in "Victoria" in 2015, but as of 2025 mostly operates out of "Vancouver." Now another NGO-styled leftie-ish, they focus on reforms and know-your-rights education, and campaigning for long-term improvements. Not really something to worry about, and they sporadically will throw small events. They somewhat begrudgingly accept anarchists alongside socialists and communists and communicate "wide-tent" politics in favour of workerism.

Young Communist League (YCL) / Popular Democracy Movement (PDM) / Communist Party of Canada (CPC)

The organization is ideologically aligned with, but organizationally sometimes independent from, the Communist Party of Canada. Fairly small and uninfluential group, who support 'Bill of Rights Socialism', are class-reductionist (although historically important in the early 20th century black labour and civil rights movement), and have been loyally pro-Soviet. They're openly revisionist, unlike many of these other groups, and followed the Stalinist rejection of world revolution, but criticized Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika initiatives after the USSR's fall. CPC are opposed to violent struggle, and support democratic, very moderate mainstream reforms (ie. $25 minimum wage), electoral and non-electoral mass social action.

They're open to multi-party coalitions with NDP and Liberals, or transitional anti-colonial/anti-imperial revolutions prior to socialism. CPC supports at least critically the governments of China, Cuba, India, Vietnam, North Korea (Beyond their explicit support, CPC and the North Korean ruling party WPK both send delegates annually to the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, a conference which ends with a joint declaration), Venezuela, and Russia, from a campist 'anti-imperialist' standpoint. They're generally more willing to criticize some of these states than others like PSL/WWP however, and are more openly pragmatist. They're in favor of coalitions with centrists, the Democrats (most of their energy is spent on getting out the vote for Democrat candidates), and capitalists against the extreme right, and coalitions with smaller corporations against multinationals.

For decades the CPC was deeply engaged in espionage for the Soviet Union, and received most of their funding from them, only separating with the USSR's dissolution.

The YCL, which was reconstituted, is somewhat more energetic in non-electoral action than the Party in general, and is more focused on radical coalition based participation in social movements and protests. In "Victoria" they've prioritized rallies raising awareness about sanctions on Cuba, and signing up volunteers to travel with the Ernesto 'Che' Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade.

The Popular Democracy Movement is another front-group connected to the CPC and YCL. They disguise themselves as a wider antifascist movement and focus on fundraising efforts for trips to beloved tankie paradises such as Venezuela, which they refer to as the "antifascist capital of the world."

Anakbayan

An international youth organization for 'National Democracy' in the Philippines. Attracts membership by appealing to young Filipinos to 'connect with [their] people and culture' as well as organizing disguisedly apolitical Queer events. Their activities are mainly consciousness-raising about imperialist domination of the flavour of the month, relating it to the Philippines, and about the extensive corruption and abuses carried out by successive governments there. They also express support and lobby institutions in solidarity with persecuted activists from the Philippines. Anakbayan participates in numerous coalitions in anti-imperialist, communist, progressive, labour, and grassroots anti-oppression struggles. Their tactics generally center on electoral reformism and symbolic protests.

Anakbayan Canada nefariously and misleadingly refers to for-profit capitalism as “an anarchist system.” While openly communist revolutionary rhetoric is not this group’s mainstay, they have published explicitly supportive statements about the Filipino guerrilla group the NPA (New People’s Army), and their associated political wing the CPP (Communist Party of the Philippines). Anakbayan decries criticism of these associations as ‘red-tagging’, however a connection between the two is broadly accepted, with Anakbayan forming part of the above-ground, politically vague/pluralist coalition component of the National Democracy Movement. The NPA and CPP respectively would be the armed and specifically Maoist vanguard party underground sections.

The NPA has received funding from North Korea, China until 1976 (they’re now enemies and the national democrats denounce China’s imperialist stance toward the Philippines), and Shining Path, and worked with the Japanese Red Army (who indiscriminately targeted and killed dozens of civilians in their handful of attacks). The NPA carried out intense purges of its members and others deemed ‘counter-revolutionaries’ or ‘criminals’, torturing and killing hundreds to thousands. These purges have been disavowed, but their causes weren’t adequately addressed, and they still continue in more subtle form. The NPA has a highly authoritarian ideology, including the strict subjugation and control of members’ sex lives by the revolutionary party, with firm ‘family values’ moralism and gender binarism. The group does notably allow trans and homosexual members within this still conservative framework, after a change in policy.

The WWP has publicly supported the CPP and NPA, as well as being a frequent co-organizer with Anakbayan, despite Russia and China (both of whom the WWP support) having developed imperialist alliances with the former Filipino dictator Rodrigo Duterte to exploit the country.

National Democracy is a Stalinist/Maoist-influenced strategy favoring a cross-class, multi-party coalition led by a proletarian communist vanguard party alongside other progressives, anti-imperialists, anti-fascists, or democratic socialists. The aim is for the coalition to carry out a ‘popular democratic’ revolution prior to the socialist revolution and finally the communist revolution. The resultant people’s democratic state would still be directed by the party however, with ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ powers. This is supposedly only in order to suppress reactionary forces that would bring back the previous bureaucrat-capitalist democracy and semi-feudal, semi-colonial conditions. In practice though, this often ends up as a pretext for abusive state power and continued class society and oppression. The participation of ‘progressive’ bourgeois elements,

national capitalists, and other non-proletarians in the people's democratic coalition is supported. The aims of the new state would be to carry out industrialization/modernization and national development of the mass proletarian revolutionary base. Additionally, there would be partial land reform and limited nationalization and redistribution of capital and the means of production away from semi-colonial-allied 'comprador' semi-feudal landlord bureaucrat capitalists. Corrupt government elements would be disempowered. This would all be possible through the political and economic support of more powerful socialist states/groups (no chance for new imperialist relations there!). The new state would in turn give support to other anti-imperialists and communists as part of this international alliance against pro-capitalist Western imperialism.

These 'people's democratic' ideas have historically been used in different parts of the world for often deceptive purposes, including as a euphemistic misrepresentation for those who in practice are standard authoritarian socialist statists. For example, North Korea being the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or in a predecessor form, the sometimes vague framings initially used by the Bolsheviks about their revolution, of it being for internal and external national autonomy, industrial development, and people's self-determination. Immediate or uncompromising revolutionary action is not generally supported in this framework, either out of determinist conceptions of historical progress building towards communism, or as undermining the necessary manipulative alliance with other members of the Popular Front (often failing to see how these other parties are themselves strategically manipulating the partnership). Another common excuse for moderacy or de-escalation often seen (not only) in these frameworks is based on the ideas of an exclusive revolutionary subject; they or we shouldn't revolt because we aren't peasants, industrial workers, colonized people, or a sufficiently organized vanguard with the necessary levels of revolutionary consciousness and scientific expertise in applying Marxist theory.

People's democracy has also been a way for communists to justify participating in traditional capitalist democratic states and avoid true criticisms of how they've been co-opted and are upholding an imperialist, capitalist, oppressive status quo. In one case, Maoist guerrillas in Nepal helped initiate a popular movement which in 2008 forced the monarchy to disband. The Maoists then formed a governing coalition in a multi-party democracy, and renounced armed struggle to amass personal wealth and power, court Western and anti-Western imperialists, and largely disavow further revolution. Another

example (though many Maoists would of course deny any relation to such revisionist Stalinists) is the parliamentarian communist parties in post-war Europe who played blatantly counter-revolutionary roles, such as the PCI in Italy or the KKE in Greece.

The strategy also sometimes allows for a limited practice of armed struggle, in many cases, including in the Philippines, through the strategy of protracted people's war. Here, fighters first establish base areas in the countryside through limited revolutionary restructuring, as well as coercive control guided by a traditional military logic. From there they encircle the cities, in which the struggle is supposed to take an electoral or reformist mass-struggle character, and draw government forces into lengthy and costly counter-insurgent campaigns in rural areas. In some cases, protracted people's war can include strategies of mass protest or insurrection inside cities, but as a means of pressuring institutional opponents in parliamentary struggles or war negotiations. Urban guerrilla actions are another occasional element, with attacks on the enemies of the revolutionary subject of the people's democracy as part of a selfless, mechanical, and reality-choreographing military framework. These attacks can also be under the rubric of the party's proletarian dictatorship exerting control (openly or not) before or after taking power by targeting 'ultraleft' competitors or internal revolutionary elements who fall victim to purging accusations of 'crime', immorality, informing, factionalism, 'wrecking', counter-revolutionary identity or actions etc.

Socialist Alternative (SA)

Slightly further left than NDP, these are milquetoast Trotskyists and democratic socialists. Claim to support revolution but spend most of their energy on minor reform campaigns like minimum wage increases (even this has been a back-and-forth issue due to their reluctance to diverge from class-collaborationist unions), and electing "progressive" city councillors. They denounce the dictatorships of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Aggressively photographs their marches and despite pushing for an independent electoralist strategy, have tended to align themselves with reactionary 'progressive' factions like the NDP.

They also work closely with their wing in the United States, who supported Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein in 2012 and 2016, with the fascist-adjacent pro-authoritarian Ajamu Baraka as vice-presidential running mate. Stein is pro-Brexit, posted a 2008 RIP message for the homophobic and repressive dictator Fidel Castro, and

attended a 2015 banquet celebrating Russian state media agency RT's 10th anniversary, where Vladimir Putin was in attendance and seated at the same table as her, along with Trump's national security advisor Michael Flynn (who was reportedly paid $45,000 to attend).

Vancouver Island Peace Council

Local chapter of the Canadian Peace Congress, another wide-tent movement that began in 1949 and is made up of different collated authoritarian socialist groups mentioned above with a strong focus on "anti-militarism."

Shortly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the YCL co-organised an event on March 20, 2022 with the Vancouver Island Peace Council, Communist Party of Canada, Victoria Peace Coalition, Socialist Fightback and other authoritarian groups in Centennial Square to pressure NATO to stop the shipments of defensive arms to Ukraine. They took advantage of the invasion as flavour of the month and focused their rhetoric against only NATO as the sole imperialist aggressor, and against the "Ukrainian regime" that jailed Communist brothers Mikhail and Alexander Kononovich.

Draw the Line

A new local chapter of an international movement. Another wide-tent attempt at collating every group that "wants as many people and as many causes on the street as possible," without much ideological or tactical filtering. Not necessarily authoritarian, but allow most politics without much of a sieve.